

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Matt Lauer, 202-683-3127

As Largest Hispanic Group in the United States, Mexicans Commemorate National Hispanic Heritage Month

MEXICO CITY, September 29, 2011 — The following is being released today by Marca País – Imagen de México:

Every year, Americans commemorate National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, and celebrate the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. This year's theme is "Keeping the Promise: Unity, Strength, Leadership."

According to the United States Census Bureau population estimates as of July 1, 2010, there are roughly 50.5 million Hispanics living in the United States, representing approximately 16.3% of the U.S. total population, making people of Hispanic origin the nation's largest ethnic or race minority. And among Hispanic subgroups, in 2010, Mexicans rank as the largest at 63 percent.

As President Barack Obama noted in a September 15 proclamation on National Hispanic Heritage Month from the White House, "Hispanics have always been integral to our national story. America is a richer and more vibrant country because of the contributions of Hispanics, and during National Hispanic Heritage Month, we celebrate the immeasurable impact they have made on our nation."

As part of this celebration, Mexicans are more than ever becoming rising stars in all facets of life in the United States – from politics to arts, science, sports, and business. On the sports front, for example, UFC® Heavyweight champion Cain Velasquez recently commented about Hispanic Heritage month on an ESPN.com interview, saying, "It [Hispanic Heritage Month] is very important to all people because we are the second-largest population in the United States. More and more our population is growing and becoming diverse."

And 22-year old mixed martial arts lightweight rising star Efrain Escudero recently told ESPN.com as well, "I was raised Hispanic, as a Mexican, and my parents always celebrate [Mexican Independence Day]. It's like we celebrate the Fourth of July. It's also an opportunity for us to get together and celebrate, not only with our family but with other Hispanics too." About his martial arts passion, Escudero added, "Every time I step into the cage, not only am I fighting for myself but I'm also fighting for everybody in Mexico. I have to give them a good name."

And there are Mexicans in the US who aren't necessarily sports celebrities as Velasquez or Escudero, but certainly are making a big difference in their communities. For example, in the Washington, DC area, it is Jackie Reyes, director of Latino Affairs and Community Outreach for Councilmember Jim Graham and of Mexican descent, who is behind a graffiti cleanup initiative that helps keep streets clean and good looking in DC's Ward 1 area.

Karen Barroso and Rolando Juarez, co-owners of Barroso, Inc. restaurant group have an authentic passion for their beloved Mexican food, and have been educating the American community in the Washington, DC area on the many diverse foods and drinks they can enjoy aside from the traditional tacos and burritos. U.S. Senator Reid and the former President Bush's daughters are among their recent visitors.

Texas State Representative Armando Walle explains the importance of Mexico as America's largest trading partner and holding great cultural ties. Walle says, "I am a proud American, but I have roots in Mexico because my grandparents and my dad were born in Mexico."

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And around this month's Hispanic Heritage celebrations, the Mexican Embassy in the United States hosted Mexico's Independence Day at the Organization of American States on September 15. Hundreds of Mexicans and friends of the Mexican community got together to sing the National Anthem, take part of "El Grito" ceremony, and enjoyed live mariachi music, as well as authentic Mexican food and beverages.

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